The Seed Sower.

A Magazine for the Church, the School, and the Home

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On the Alps.

Up thro' long sweeping mists of nascent morn,
By trail of quaint hay-sledge, with patient tread
We clomb the veilèd heights, while overhead,
Thro' gap of vapours by the young wind torn,
Visions of sunlit snow were dimly born.
We heard the hurtling of the torrent-bed,
The tinkling bells of kine that unseen fed,
The bellowing of the far Alp's strident horn.
So sped long hours, mid' changeful fears and hopes;
Then on the heights one infinite surprise,
Marvels of fairest flowers upon the slopes,
And awful splendours of the earth and skies.
O God, a life not unlike this I pray:
Dim fears, calm toil, and then—pure light of day!

W. WALSHAM BEDFORD.

The Revelation.

"An idle poet, here and there
Looks round him; but, all for the rest,
The world, unfathomably fair,
Is duller than a witling's jest.
Love wakes men once a life-time each;
They lift their heavy lids and look;
And, lo! what one sweet page can teach
They read with joy, then shut the book.
And some give thanks, and some blaspheme,
And most forget; but either way,
That and the child's unheeded dream
Is all the light of all their day."

COVENTRY PATMORE.

Water.

AN ADDRESS AT THE Y.M.C.A., MANSFIELD, BY THE REV. E. I. FRIPP, B.A.

"Let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."
REV. xxii. 17.

FEW things that God has made are more wonderful or more beautiful than water. Think for a moment what a prominent and lovely feature it is in the landscape. The clouds are water—heavy masses or thin delicate streaks of floating vapour, piled up like vast inaccessible precipices or sailing like suspended gossamer through the heavens, brilliant in their pure silvery brightness against the blue of mid-day or a blaze of red and orange and purple and colours for which there are no words at sunset. Half the beauty and grandeur of Nature would be gone without this upper world of marvellous vapour. The snow, too, is water—the snow upon the mountains, the dazzling, indescribable covering of the Alps, once seen never to be forgotten, never melting, everlasting as the history of man, there before man was born, there after he is gone; or falling softly and gently on our quiet English fields and pointed roofs and widely-branching trees, clothing them with a fairylike transforming

mantle of whiteness. The rainbow is water, spanning the earth with its arch of promise and mercy—a band of heavenly colour on the dark sky. The dew is water, hanging in drops of pearl on the morning grass; and the mist rising and vanishing before the rays of the sun; and the foam of the torrent leaping down the rocky gorge; and the spray of the sea dashing against the cliffs; and the curling wave rolling in on the beach; and the gliding river that winds its way past meadow, city, and mill, and bears on its bosom the ship bound for foreign shores; and the brook that slips and murmers from stone to stone through the quiet wood; and the deep pool, clear as crystal, where the fish lie and hide; and the broad lake reflecting as in a mirror the sky, and hills, and over-hanging trees—all this is water, common water, one of the commonest yet one of the most precious and glorious gifts of God.

But water is as useful as it is beautiful. It is indispensable to *life*—vegetable life, animal life, human life. The corn cannot grow, nor the flowers bloom, nor the birds sing, nor man fulfil his varied tasks, without it. Water is a food. It is the only thing that quenches thirst. All the drinks in the world only quench thirst in so far as they contain water. A liquid that does not contain water kills,—is unfit to drink, and acts as a poison. Everything that has life is a water creature. Man is a water drinker by Nature and by necessity. To be ashamed to drink water is to be ashamed to be a man. To laugh at water drinkers is to laugh at oneself. When a man laughs at another for preferring water to wine, he forgets that it is only in the virtue of the water in his wine, and the more of it the better, that his thirst can be satisfied. Water by itself is obviously Nature's drink for man, fresh from the hand of God, freely granted to us, in this country, on every hand. And as other drinks come and go, pure water remains—like a quiet man in a noisy company, whose thoughtful word survives their loud speaking. It is the cheapest drink, and it is the best—the commonest, and the most healthy. It is gratuitous and everyday, like sleep and fresh air. These things cannot be estimated in terms of money. They are natural and superior to anything artificial. They will endure no substitutes long. We have to come back to them. Opiates do not produce the true genuine sleep—they do not give the same blessed restfulness. Nor is the heated atmosphere of rooms to be compared with the glow of exercise in the open air. God gave the sleep, and man administers the drug. God provided the breeze and the wind, man shuts himself up in his chamber. So God made the water and man fermented wine. The thirst for wine is similar to the taste for opium and close air. The warmth that comes from alcohol is just of that feverish sort that comes of gas fumes and carbonic acid. And as educated people now almost universally sleep with their windows open, so I believe they will some day give up their beer and wine and return to water. Even as a medicine there is good evidence that it and opiates will go the way of stuffy rooms and coddling. Water will have its justification as fresh air is having its justification in the new sanatorium treatment for disease. Fermented liquors are all more or less putrid liquors, liquors, that is, in an initial and arrested stage of putrefaction — full of incipient fungus growths or germs liable to attack the human frame. The taste for such drinks, which has to be acquired—though when once acquired it is difficult to get rid of—is on a par with that for highly seasoned game and other things in a semi-decayed condition. These liquors, such is the remarkable vitality and power of accomodating itself to circumstances in the body, may, like an ill-ventilated room, be apparently harmless, especially in the case of men and women with very strong constitutions. But water is a continual protest against them as artificial, luxurious, pampered, and unwholesome. It has only to wait for its day. Nature and simplicity and inexpensiveness are certain to win in the end.

Next consider the *poetry* of water. The finest literature, as well as the finest scenery, is associated with water. Only third-rate and fourth-rate writers sing the praises of Bacchus. Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning, are not the wine poets. Shakespeare's heroes and

heroines scarcely touch strong drink—and only then when they are not themselves, when some weakness in their character is uppermost. And none of them get good from it. On the other hand some of them make the most terrible confessions about it that are to be found in the English tongue. Listen, for instance, to what a gifted man says in *Othello*, after drinking too much wine, and thereby, let it be noted, opening the way for the awful crime of that tragedy—"O God, that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains!"

Lady Macbeth could only steel herself to her wicked purpose by the help of strong drink. "What hath made them drunk," she says of the attendants about the king's bed, "hath made me bold."

And now let us go to the Bible. What is there said about wine you are already familiar with, and the terrible sins brought on by it. Let me remind you of some of the beautiful episodes, scenes, and thoughts, associated with that book of books with water.

At the very beginning is the picture of the Garden among the rivers—a Garden of the Lord, well watered everywhere—a picture that had a strange fascination for those Eastern people so liable to drought, so accustomed to a blazing sun and choking dust and the lassitude of heat, so grateful for rain, and so piously thankful for wells. At the outset of their history was the pleasing story of a paradise of trees and grass and streams, where deity itself did not refuse to be, in the cool of the evening. Then a few chapters further on, we read of the old shepherd-chief sending the slave-girl on her journey, setting her child on one shoulder and a skin of water on the other, and of her losing her way in the wilderness until the water was spent, and then in despair, lest she should see her child die, laying it down under a shrub and walking a bowshot off, but suddenly, after much lamentation, beholding, what she had not seen in her tears and cries, a little spring at her very feet, as if God had put it for her there and then to save the life of her child and of herself.

Next comes the story, that ought to be of such interest to sportsmen and athletes, of the great Sun-hero, Samson. He, the strongest man in Scripture, physically, stronger in body than Goliath, able to rend a young lion as if it were a kid, drank no wine. Nay, he was a Nazarite, a teetotaler of the strictest type, with such a distaste for wine that he would not even eat grapes or touch them. We hear of him in the vineyards of Timnath, but he would not take of the rich beautiful clusters hanging on the trees. I think this was prejudiced of him. God made the vine, and there is no fruit more useful for food in hot countries than the grape. And even in those days it was by no means always turned into an intoxicating drink. Pharaoh's butler, you remember, used to take the bunch of grapes in his hand, when waiting at the royal table, and squeeze them into the king's cup.. That was the wise monarch who detected genius in the young Hebrew, Joseph, and made him, in a critical time, his minister. Pass now to a later period in the history of Israel. There are some beautiful well-stories in the Old Testament, but none in my opinion is so noble as that of David and the well of Bethlehem. We see Rebekah at the well, with her pitcher, drawing water for Abraham's servant Eleazer; and then Rachel at the well with her lover Jacob; and then Zipporah at the well, the daughter of the priest of Midian, defended by Moses from the rudeness of the shepherds. All these are delightful pictures of youth and health and courage and courtsey. Yet none of them in my judgment is so touching as the episode at Bethlehem. David knew the little town and loved it, its cool, flat-roofed stone houses, its narrow streets winding up the hill, its market, its gate, and the old well by the gate. Many a time his mother or sister had drawn water from it for the use of the household, and many a time the lad had watched the bucket descend mysteriously into its dark depths and wondered perhaps what would be the best thing to do if he should happen to tumble in! Years afterwards Bethlehem was in the hands of the Philistines. David and his men were shut out of it. And one day, weary with the uphill and difficult warfare, he said, "O, for a drink of water from the well at the gate!" And three men who heard him, strong, brave warriors, devoted to their chief, unknown to him, made

their way through the lines of the enemy, entered the town and drew water from the well. Then they returned and brought the water to David. And he, when he knew what they had done, would not drink of it. It was too precious to drink. It was a symbol of love and self-sacrifice, and as such he poured it out as an offering to the Lord.

I know no story of a cup of drink of any sort nobler than this—except one, yes, except one, which is the noblest of all, and, I acknowledge, a story of a cup of *wine*. You know what I mean—that touching, sublime incident at the Last Supper, when Jesus Christ took wine and gave it to his disciples saying, *Drink ye of it, it is my blood.* It is no good for some to argue that this was unfermented wine. It seems to me to take away from the inner spiritual significance of the act to discuss such a point. It was a special supper at which wine was usually drunk. It happened to be on the table, and Jesus found it fit for his purpose. At the same time, if water had by chance been there instead of wine, and our Lord had used it in the same sacred manner, it would have been as appropriate—at least as a symbol of His *life*. It would, I think, have been in keeping with His simplicity and poverty. And did he not feel the beauty of water? He loved the lake of Galilee—to walk along its margin, to sail upon it in a boat, to fall to sleep in the stern of a rocking ship. The river was dear to him—he himself went down into the Jordan to be baptised, to be bathed in its pure stream by that brave, undaunted prophet. We think of him also among the sick by the pools of Bethesda and Siloam at Jerusalem, and again by Jacob's well in Samaria, and of what he said of water as the symbol of charity, and mercy, human and divine love. From him we have those simple grand words of human fellowship, within the power of all, the poorest as well as the rich, *A Cup of Cold Water in My name.* And from him came that divine discourse about the "living water," so much more precious than the pure water with which the patriarch Jacob quenched the thirst of himself, his children and his cattle, the water of God's divine grace welling up within a man's own heart and giving him a foretaste of everlasting life. The psalmist had spoken of walking by "the still waters," and of the soul longing for God as the hart panteth after the water-brooks. This divine thirst Jesus Christ awakened in men and *satisfied.* He took us to the great Fountain Head where all may drink without money or price. The soul awakened by him needs God and must have Him ere it can find rest. We want the life of God—not our erring, daily, simple foolish existence, but that life for which we were born into this world, which he desires to impart to us, of which we may all participate freely if we will only go to Him and ask for it, as a little child knocking at the door and asking for a cup of water—the life of Goodness Himself—of love and pity, gentleness and long suffering, truth and peace and blessedness. Ah, my friends, let us go hither poor and maimed as we are, in want of healing, in need of so great a forgiveness. Let us say to Him—"I want Thee, my Father. Make me good. Love me in spite of my follies and failures. Cleanse me with Thy purifying streams and give me a Christ-like heart."

Astronomical Notes for August

The most important astronomical event in this month will be the eclipse of the sun on the 30th. There is also an eclipse of the moon on the 15th, but as it begins at 2.39 a.m., and ends at 4.43, few besides professional astronomers and newspaper men are likely to see much of it. The eclipse of the sun on the 30th is a total eclipse, but is only visible as a partial one in this country, about four-fifths of the sun being obscured. At Greenwich the eclipse begins at 11.49 a.m., the middle (when the greatest portion of the sun is hidden by the moon passing in front of it) is at 1.4 p.m., and the eclipse ends at 2.15. The planets visible during the month are Mars and Saturn, the latter rising during most of the month between 7 and 8 o'clock.

Cast forth thy act, thy word, into the ever-living, ever-working universe. It is a seed grain that cannot die.—*Carlyle.*

The Uses of Solitude.

"After we have made the just reckonings which retirement will help us to, we shall begin to think the world in a great measure mad." This conclusion was one of the fruits of William Penn's solitude, which he gave to the world in the little book of "Pensées," lately republished. The old Quaker of Pennsylvania must have known something about the world, for he had lived in society and in prison, in Courts and in solitudes, in the Old World and in the New. Certainly a community which would put a man in prison for being a Quaker must have seemed to that Quaker a very mad world indeed, but the solitude which was intended for chastisement presently yielded peaceable fruit, and no doubt Penn found much pleasure in writing and polishing the maxims with the production of which he amused his discreet retirement in the country, his hiding, or his prison. None of these aphorisms are witty, but they are wise, and well worth reading.

Penn "dealt only," to use his own expression, "in substantial wares." And he sets the reader wondering how much time it is worth while to give to the deliberate contemplation of life,—to the free play of the imagination, and to the production and classification of our own conclusions.

According to Penn we should lose no time by this sacrifice, because it is only in solitude that we are able to make that plan of life which will enable us to gauge its space and fill it full. Looking back in middle age he feels that, could he live his life again, he could "not only with God's grace serve Him, but his neighbour and himself, better than he hath done, and have seven years of his time to spare, yet he hath not been the worst nor the idlest man in the world." To many men a certain amount of solitude is as necessary to their mental as sleep is to their physical health,—it is the *sine qua non* of any mental production. Others can live almost incessantly in what Penn somewhat vaguely calls "the throng" without too much waste of mental tissue, either because they are capable of maintaining two trains of thought, and are thus able to carry their own solitude about with them—just as some men will talk, or even argue, while they play whist—or because they are so constituted that they can do nothing except in company, and think of nothing except in answer. Some minds like some matches, require contact with a prepared surface before they emit a spark. They—so to speak—strike only on the box. These last form a very large class, especially in the present day. They may not be original, but they are very human, social, and sympathetic. No great ornament to any community, they yet form the mortar which holds communities together. They take up the neglected work of more original minds, "which often proves a profitable harvest to them which never sowed"—as Penn reflects—"and though they don't lead they follow well and glean clean." William Penn in loving solitude made a virtue of necessity. He "blessed God for his retirement" which gave him "some time which he could call his own," and he recommends a certain amount of solitude as an opportunity for thought, and where possible as almost a duty. But is it a duty for those who do not love it? and have even those who do a right to more of it than will keep them in mental health? We should say "No" to both questions. A man's duty is to work and to keep himself mentally and physically in condition for work, but if he feels pretty sure that he has nothing in his inner consciousness worth digging up and giving to the world, there is no obligation upon him to "re-enter himself" at given intervals, shake up and loosen his hopes, affections, and beliefs for no purpose. A man with spiritual genius, whether it be for prayer or poetry, needs solitude—and starves his soul if he does not seek it—but most of us have no such genius, and if we dislike solitude though it may prove us deficient in the higher kinds of imagination, it may also prove us to be without morbid vanity and the modern love of self-dissection. Know thyself, says the sage; but we may do this to sufficiently good purpose without coming out from among the many people better worth knowing. Religion and repentance we have heard spoken of as "fruits of solitude"; but if religion means Christianity—and not that religion which allows a man to love God whom he hath not seen and hate his brother whom he hath

seen—it can surely direct a man's life "in the throng"; and as to repentance, that fruit, if it be bitter enough to do him any good, will draw his mouth just the same if he feast in company or fast in private. A love of seclusion does not of itself presuppose a good character, any more than a hatred of it presuppses a bad one. There are many people who love solitude not because it enables them to work better or because they find anything in it of any use to themselves or others, but because they think it the best refuge from the shadow of other people's troubles and the burden of their own responsibilities. They fear some emergency in which they might be required to lend a hand, and so take care to live out of call. Such people have no right to their self-indulgence, and one can only say in their defence, as Mrs. Carlyle's servant said of the ladies who gave all their time to minute religious observances, that "they might have taken to worse." Inspired thinkers must of course listen for their message where they think they can best hear it,—alone, or among men. The world has no right to comment on their choice. Of them Matthew Arnold's verse is true,—

"Unaffrighted by the silence round them,
Undistracted by the sights they see,
These demand not that the things without them
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy."

The conclusion of the whole matter seems to us that every man has a right to as much solitude as he can make fruitful, and no more. His duty is to leaven the lump, and he cannot do it from the outside. Even in the rare cases where a life of solitude is intentionally given to religious deovtion, we should doubt the morality of the sacrifice. Prayer may be necessary to the life of the soul; so is food to the life of the body, but we must not live to eat. We wonder what William Penn would have said about the unavoidable solitude so often the sad lot of those who are very old and very poor. How would he have told them to turn it to account without the habit of reading, the habit of thought, or, in London at least, the habit of devotion? Would he have merely repeated the quaint sentence with which in his book he dismisses a whole class? "God sends the poor to try us as much as he tries them by being such." Penn did not meditate very much about the state of the poor, but he was genuinely thankful that he did not belong to them. He writes: "It seems reasonable that those whom God has distinguished from others by his goodness should distinguish themselves to him by their gratitude."

The present writer is acquainted with several poor people living in single rooms on a pension which saves them from the anxiety and deprives them of the diversion of forethought. These are involuntary solitaries and suffer from their solitude, which is to them an evil less than the workhouse because it leaves them the companionship of their pride. Friendship is not very common among the uneducated, and when those contemporaries among whom circumstances threw them are dead they are generally very lonely. However, they have some advantages over those who have learnt the art of making friends. They have no one to leave. To use their own illogical phrase, they "do not regret" their "call," but go courageously to their solitary deaths upheld by a vague hope of joining "the blessed company" somewhere else.

The Expectation of Change.

The signs are many that a great and radical change of opinion on religious and social questions is going forward. No one believes now what men believed fifty years ago, and social ideals are widely different at the present time. More than this, there is a widespread expectation of further change. Persons of all beliefs and parties, except the most conservative and stubbornly retrogressive, are anticipating a new period of intellectual and spiritual life, which will bring about large changes in the social relations of men.

This anticipation of change is largely the result of the acceptance of "development" as it appeals to emotion and the imagination. Perhaps it is also the result of social unrest, but the discontent is itself only a symptom of the anticipation of change. The expectation of a new kind of life is not one that especially manifests itself among the wage-workers, but it appears in the most intellectual and thoughtful classes. Therefore, it is

probably in no small measure due to our educational methods, and to the habit of reading and thinking that is so widely developed as the result of our school and college activities. Also this expectation is due to the altruistic teachings of the pulpit, that call for a higher form of social activity. It is a part of the moral conviction of the time that love is the greatest thing, and that the Golden Rule is workable.

However imperfect may be this diagnosis of the mental attitude that anticipates change, there can be no doubt about the fact that such anticipation is wide-spread and radical. It shows itself in many directions, in many forms of expression, and in the shape of a great number of theries as to what should be done. That many persons are anticipating change may be taken as proof that we are on the eve of a new epoch, but such conclusion must be accepted with caution. Every age is one of transition, and changes are always taking place with greater or less rapidity. In many directions the present time is in no sense remarkable in its transitional character.

Change does not come merely by anticipating it, or because many persons feel that it is desiradble. The power of conservatism is always great, and what has been established and become traditional maintains itself with remarkable persistency. There is a psychological reason for this which reformers do not recognise, and which brings them many a bitter disappointment. It is not merely that men dread revolution and change, but that they are wedded to what has been, in the sense that they cannot easily escape from its influence. It is easy enough to think that a better method can be devised, but it is not possible for masses of men to act together in a new direction. They do not act together when the moment of action comes that will produce change, simply because they do not think and feel together as to what is desirable.

Although there is always at work a powerful motive against change, yet it is to be anticipated that changes will come. The anticipation is always in considerable measure a prophecy, and it is even an assurance that the change has already begun. The desire for a new kind of life is in itself the realisation of that life, else the demand for it would not find utterance. When it is declared that love is the greatest thing in the world, it is at once not only accepted as a truth, but it is discovered that many persons are living in harmony with that ideal, or else it would not find expression. The preaching of altruism by so many shows that already we are in some degree acting upon their doctrines, else they would not give them utterance, or would not be understood. The change is therefore taking place, and it is the realisation of that fact which gives justification to and motive for the larger anticipation that is now finding expression in many directions.

What we ought to desire is a simpler form of living, a deeper ethical conviction, and practice, a clearer spiritual insight into realities, and a universal sharing in the rewards and joys of life. We are to look for a larger manifestation of justice, a wider recognition of the ethically right, and a genuine fidelity to the spirit of brotherhood. We need more of the spirit and the reality of co-operation, that we may come into closer smmpathy with each other, and that we may share with each other in a more kindly affection. We are no longer content with these beliefs and ideals as such, but we wish to put them into practice. In that consists the change that is coming rapidly, and with promise of large benefit to our social and moral life. The expectation of beneficient changes is preparing the way for them, and will help bring them to pass.

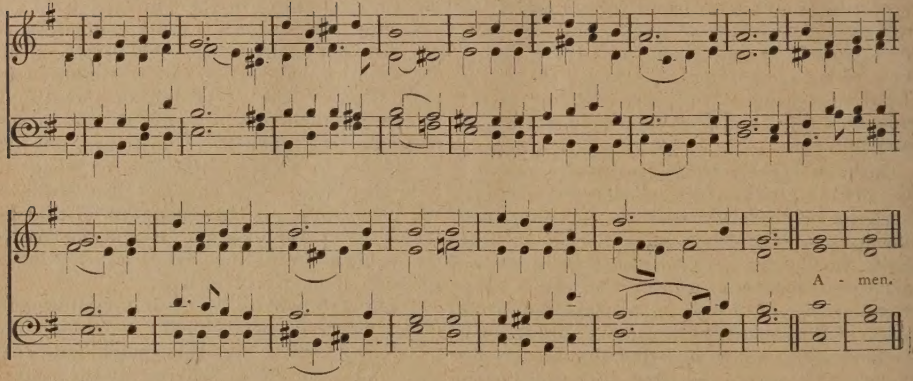
The will of God will be done; but, oh, the unspeakable loss for us if we have missed our opportunity of doing it!—*Brooke Foss Westcott.*

Wherever the work of the Lord is to be carried on, that is my pace for to-day; and we live only for to-day. It is not our part to take thought for to-morrow.—*Wesley.*

The humblest man or woman can live splendidly! That is the royal truth that we need to believe, you and I who have no "mission," no great sphere to move in. The universe is not yuite complete without my work well done.—*W. C. Gannett.*

Harvest.

(From "The New Hymnal.") GEORGE HALFORD.



1 Lo! summer comes again,
And after spring-tide rain,
The quick'ning sunbeams flood the world with light:
See, high in nights' clear skies,
The joy of longing eyes,
The moon of harvest shines serenely bright.

2 O Lord of heaven and earth,
Who givest joy and mirth,
Open our lips to show Thy wondrous praise;
Our hearts are dull and cold,
We leave Thy love untold,
O give us strength our anthems glad to raise.

3 Each month we sow and reap,
Each hour we toil or sleep,
Thou givest life and joy, and Thou alone:
O grant to each and all,
When death's dark shadows fall,
To stand, true workers, round our Master's throne.

4 So life's long task-work o'er,
Set free for evermore,
We shall sit down at Thy great harvest feast;
Reaper and sower met,
The burning heat forget,
And taste God's love, the greatest as the least.

DEAN PLUMPTRE.

The New Hymnal.

Most of our readers are aware that a committee of ministers, together with Mr. Geo. H. Leigh, of Swinton, have for some time had in preparation a new Hymn and Tune Book. As the chairman of the committee is the editor of the SEED SOWER, it is obvious that these are not the pages for a laudatory review. But the following account of the book and its contents may not be without interest and use for our readers. It had long been felt by many of our friends that the time had come for a book which should combine hymn and tune on one page. The immense impetus given to congregational singing in the Church of England, by the publication, now more than 40 years ago, of Hymns Ancient and Modern, has given rise to the publication of similar books by other denominations, so that Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, and the various sections of Methodists have now the advantage which for a long time the Church of England alone enjoyed. It is true that Dr. Martinson's "Hymns of Praise and Prayer" was accompanied by a musical edition, but this, though it displayed much thought, care, research, and musical ability, never caught on with our churches. For why? need not now be discussed. Neither did the excellent musical works for Sunday

Schools, published in London and Manchester, supply the needs of congregations. Organists selected their tunes from half-a-dozen different books, and any poor tenor or bass in the congregation who wanted to put in his part, unless he were a very good musician, had to flounder about for the right notes, never sure that he was not making a mess of it. The vamped-up bass parts that we have heard would be amusing if they were not musically so distressing. Further, the need of a combined hymn and tune book for home and family gatherings has long been felt, and friends talking these matters over come to the conclusion that our churches and families ought to be as well equipped for religious song as those of other and larger communions. One of the difficulties in the way had been that of expense. To supply music to the hymns more than doubles the cost, and it was seen that in a small group of churches like ours a musical edition was not likely to pay its way. So earnest, however, were the promoters that, by the kindness of sympathisers they raised a guarantee fund of sufficient amount to justify the proposed venture. It was hoped that the National Conference would take up the work initiated by a few ministers, but as this did not seem advisable, it was determined to carry the thing through on private responsibility.

The book has been nearly three years in preparation, and is now published in two editions by Novello and Co.—the musical edition at 3s. 6d., and a words only edition at 1s. 6d. It contains 658 hymns and nearly 400 tunes. Of the hymns about one-half are the same as in "Hymns of Praise and Prayer," the other half consisting largely of hymns written during the last 30 years, including hymns by Stopford A. Brooke, J. Russell Lowell, Rudyard Kipling, John Ruskin, Felix Adler, J. P. Hopps, Geo. Macdonald, Phillips Brookes, and a large number by our American friends, Chadwick, Savage, Hosmer, Johnson, Gannett, S. Longfellow, and Whittier. Of the older hymn writers, Isaac Watt is represented by 10, Charles Wesley by 29, Montgomery by 16, Faber by 12, and Gill by 16. The endeavour of the compilers has been to make the selection as catholic as possible. The book contains a larger number of Christological hymns than some of our friends would be prepared to use, but it includes also a very large number of ethical and nature hymns. In the words of the Preface, "An effort is here made to provide a book as broad and inclusive in its tone as the outlook of Liberal Christianity and as the conditions of our Free Church life. It is not, therefore, especially representative of any one school of thought among us, but endeavours to provide expression for the wide range of differences which mark our churches, and for the whole area of religious life and experience. It is not attempted to do this by a colourless book, or by any selection of hymns which everybody can sing. In a really representative book, a book for all our churches, there will necessary be hymns which some desire and will use which others will set aside. A spirit, an atmosphere, a devotional unity may be secured, but to rule out every expression to which criticism may object on the one side or the other would be to impoverish most lamentably its scope, and to limit most fatally its range of acceptance."

The tunes selected will probably give rise to more differences of opinion than the words. Music which has long been long wedded to certain words will be given up with great reluctance. It has been impossible to retain everybody's favourite tune. To quote again from the Preface, "It not seldom happens that the favourite tune for a given hymn is not the same in one part of the country as in another. Tunes most popular in the North are often unknown in the South. An endeavour has been made to choose the best between various usages, and if some miss a familiar association between hymn and tune, it is hoped and believed that in course of time the new arrangement will prove as acceptable as the old."

The committee are alone responsible for the selection of tunes, but they have had the valuable advice and assistance of Mr. Granville Bantock, Principal of the Birmingham School of Music, who has also revised the harmonies throughout, and contributed several new and beautiful tunes. Among other musicians who have written new tunes for special hymns are, Dr. Sinclair, organist of Hereford Cathedral;

Dr. Tozer, Exeter; Mr. Cotton, Mr. Geo. Halford, Mus. Bac.; Mr. C. W. Perkins, Mr. Newey, Mr. A. Joll, Mr. John Harrison, Mr. G. Percy Haris, and Rev. F. A. Homer. Of the well-known composers of modern church music, Dykes is represented by 24 tunes, Sullivan by 15, Barnby by 10, Monk by 6, Stainer by 6, and Hopkins by 4. A short appendix of seven additional tunes is given as alternatives to tunes in the body of the book.

Churches will be supplied on special terms, on application to Rev. H. Gow, B.A., 3, John Street, Hampstead. Copies also can be had in superior binding on application to the publishers.

A Scripture Reader's Letter.

To an Anxious Enquirer.

[The following letter from a "Scripture Reader" in the city of Birmingham is too significant a document to be just consigned to the waste-paper basket. While it is hoped there are not many official "Readers" so ignorant of Scripture and so filled with the spirit of intolerance as the writer of this epistle, it may yet give pause to some of our friends who are apt to think that Liberal ideas and the Liberal spirit are winning their way in all the churches. It is to be feared that not a few of the friends of Liberal religion are living in a fools' paradise as to the overthrow of violent bigotry and venomous intolerance. A letter like this will come to them with a shock of surprise, all the more painful when they know that it records a temper by no means uncommon on the part of the particular agency to which the writer belongs. We are able to vouch for the genuineness of the letter, although the author's name is for obvious reasons not given. The Italics are the writer's.—Ed.]

Dear Mr. —

Since our last conversation I have been considering as to the best way of treating such a case as yours. It seems best—I think—to refer you to the fact that *all* men, unless they accept Jesus the Christ as *Lord of all*, and worship Him accordingly, must be treated *by Him* as rebels. He, at least, can have nothing to do with "Theological Tramps." But He is always easy of access to the Earnest Enquirer and the really true seeker after truth. To any who think that active intellects are better than conscientiousness, He has nothing to say.

One of the things you have to learn—and that from the Holy Scriptures—is that He has chosen certain people to rule His Church, and that that Church will ultimately rule and judge, not merely this earth, but the whole creation. Secondly, that the man who looks with irreverence upon the things of God must meet his reward as a profane animal. From this we shall see that we must not come to the Scriptures with a jaunty air, and as a judge, but as men having moral *needs*, and spiritual capacities to satisfy. Scorners must go their own way, and they who *neglect* so great a Salvation as that offered by the Lord of all, and *through His atonement despises* God's *appointed* way of Salvation and cannot be saved any other way. It is not God who cuts him off, but he, himself, cuts himself by his *refusal* to take God at His word. Unbelief is a sign of hatred, just as belief is a sign (and the necessary outcome) of love. Again, we believe to understand, not understand to believe. I am not troubling to quote passages to prove my point, you can find them by reading.

The Lord is *seeking Worshippers*, not debaters, not "praying people." He can get both sorts anywhere. He asks men to *use* their reason, and to use it rightly, and the man who stops at home, and absents himself from Worship, and simply trots round to criticise preachers and teachers, is not worth a pinch of snuff. Priestly, Jacks, Pipe, Wood, Dawson, and others of a like kidney may suit them, but, to them—unless they repent—the door of Heaven will be shut.

Such men talk of liberty, but they themselves are slaves of corruption, murmurers, irreverent fools for whom the blackness of darkness is reserved for ever.

Yours truly,

P.S.—I have a Tuesday Evening Class in Parish Room every Tuesday, at 8 p.m. Should you care to come to it. Only those who want to learn are welcome.

Empty Homes.

Miss Thackeray observes that the position of the furniture in a room in which a party has been sitting is an excellent index to the tone of feeling of the little assembly. There may have been the formal, solemn visitation, wherein three or four straight-backed chairs have been drawn up equidistantly just within speaking distance, and then have been pushed back equally formally when the sitters arose to make their bows of farewell. Or there may be the cosy, easy, four-o'clock tea ar-arrangements, when lounging chairs are dragged close to settees, and light cane seats are inserted anyhow between ottomans and tables, and where everybody has obviously changed places half-a-dozen times to get nearer to somebody else, and gone away without a thought of pushing away his or her last occupied chair. And, finally, there is the woeful scene which has ended in a quarrel, when the table is pushed out of its place, and the fire-irons have been let fall, and a small, spider-legged chair has been knocked over as somebody went out of the room in a rage.

It is always a little ghostly to go into a room in the middle of the night under any of these circumstances, and reproduce in imagination the absent people, or even to re-enter, some hours after we have left it in the evening, our own familiar study or sitting-room, and see the chair we ourselves last sat in standing empty. Is it empty? Or did there not seem, as we came in, some horrible *doppel-ganger*, some "double" of ourselves, sitting in it in our place? Very much such odd feelings attach to the idea of our homes without their inhabitants, when we have gone away for our annual flitting, and left an empty nest, or perchance a nest brooded over by some trusty servant, or perhaps by some old owl of a "woman in charge," concerning whose manners and customs and general relations to gin-bottles and thieves we have very dim information. Lives there the mistress of a family whose holiday in the country or at the seaside is not poisoned, more or less, by the vague fear of "what may be happening at home;" unless, indeed, she be so fortunate as to be able to leave her house in charge of that invaluable person, a really good and long-trusted servant? Every "house-mother," as the Germans very properly call her, loves her house, strikes her heart-roots down into the very coal-cellar, and twines tendrils of sentiment far up into the attics. The idea of the intrusion of unlicensed visitors—even if they do no harm—is to her mind a sort of profanation; and a conflagration—even if the house be insured beyond its value—an irreparble misfortune.

Now, who shall say what may not be happening in any given empty house at any hour of these twenty-four? Mrs. Plausible, who looked so miraculously respectable when she came to be engaged, may very possibly tipple in the solitude of the mansion under her care, and burn herself to death, and of course the house along with her, after the manner of Sardanapalus. Or Mrs. Needy, the charwoman, in spite of her promises to the contrary, may have brought in all her nine children from Moorfields, and the dirty little things may be sleeping every night in those beautiful new spring beds from Heal's—and the consequences will perhaps be revealed in entomological discoveries hereafter. Bridget O'Blarney may have had a "follower," though she always denied it; and if so, that "follower" beyond a doubt spends his days at present in the kitchen, and introduces therein any number of select acquaintances from the nearest "public," who, having learned the geography of the house, will rob it with the greatest ease as soon as the plate is brought back on the return of the family. And, finally, what is there to hinder canny Mrs. McBawbie from letting off the drawing-room floor to any lodgers who may be willing to pay her a moderate rent, and to decamp without beat of drum on notice that "missus" is coming home? Such are but a sample of the legion of alarming visions which float through the mind of the poor lady concerning her darling *dulce domum*, her "Home, sweet Home," while a cold and heartless world imagines she is entirely enjoying herself at Wiesbaden or Chamounix, at Margate or at Scarborough! What to her are the rolling green hills of German forests, or the heaven-piercing snowy cones of Alpine heights, or the "sad sea-

waves," while all the time ruin may reign at No. 1? The parrot may squawk and no one give it water; and poor puss, having devoured the last mouse in the room in which she has been carelessly shut up, may die a miserable death in spite of the money left for cat's-meat, and the odour of her remains make the best bedroom uninhabitable for a twelve-month. Of course the water-pipes, or indeed cistern, may, and in the mind of Materfamilias probably will, overflow and carry desolation to newly-painted walls and freshly-whitened ceilings. The gas may leak—"that gaselier in the back parlour always *did* leak," repeats the house-mother with a pang; and then the woman in charge will come in at night with a candle and there will be an explosion. As to the wine cellar, how easy it will have been during all those weeks to get a false key and empty that little bin of dry sherry in the right-hand corner! Where shall the suggestions of alarm and anxiety terminate? Only when poor, harassed Materfamilias drives up to her own door, after first casting one earnest glance to make sure the house is still standing, runs up and down all over it, and finds everything right and clean, do her terrors subside, and she confesses confidentially that she has never been thoroughly happy till that moment of relief.

An empty house in the country in the bright summer time has very different associations from a deserted town residence in the waning summer. One of those beautiful houses which people go to see—but which, for one reason or another, the owners are not inhabiting at the moment—always gives the impression of being a sort of fairy palace, where the roses are blowing outside and the rooms are all waiting for happy people to sit and lounge, and read books in the library and play the silent instruments, and banquet at the long-drawn tables, but which is, somehow, under a charm. The Princess must surely be sleeping in some lovely "bower" under rose-coloured satin curtains at the end of one of the corridors, and all her Court are turned into mice till the enchanter's wand is waved, and they will all start up and resume their functions. Everything is intended for human use and enjoyment, but it is all still and calm—sweet, with the peculiar sweetness which belongs to noble old rooms—but silent as the grave. Is it not marvellous that people for whom such earthly Edens open wide their doors, find pleasure by preference in rushing about hot, dusty, noisy railways and hotels, herded into *tables d'hôte* of sixty and eighty famished travellers, and contending from morning to night with innkeepers, porters, drivers, and all the rest of that most uninteresting tribe of human creatures with whom alone travellers come in contact? Yet so it is—and of taste there is no disputing.

There is but one way to leave home, either in town or country, without anxiety. It is for masters and mistresses to secure, as the first requisite of comfort and peace, a servant whom they can really trust. There are plenty of capable servants who are unsteady or dishonest, and, on the other hand, plenty of well-intentioned servants who are incapables. From both classes the house-mother must hope to be delivered; for it is impossible to say which is worst, the woman who knows her duty but will not do it, or the woman who would fain do her duty, but when the gas escapes, or the cistern bursts, or burglars try to get in at the window, goes immediately into hysterics on the kitchen floor, and leaves her employer's property to destruction. The servant who deserves to be called "trustworthy" must neither be knave nor fool, and blessed is the man or woman who has secured his or her services.—The Late Francis Power Cobbe.

(*By permission.*)

The Eden of Milton, and of Dante:

A Comparison and a Contrast.

Adam is born into Eden—sinless, but only because untried; Dante returns to Eden, purged of the sin which drove Adam forth. The two points of view may stand for the two extremes of man's life on earth—the sinlessness of childhood and the close of a life which has conquered sin.

Milton's Eden represents a state of innocence which is dependent upon ignorance for its duration; Dante's Eden stands for a condition of equal purity, but purity won by

conquest over that sin from all trace of which it has been purged.

Adam, who seems so blessed, has everything to fear could he but know it; Dante has sounded danger to the depths and risen again.

Milton's Eden keeps us looking back in bitterness to what we have lost; the Eden of the Purgatorio is a prospect to give us courage and to fill us with hope. For to innocence has been added wisdom—the wisdom of experience,—once, indeed, bound up with pain, but from which pain has now dropped out.

The pathos of Milton's Eden is almost overpowering, for we see it in the light of the inevitable "fall":—

"and do they stand
By ignorance? Is that their happy state?
The proof of their obedience and their faith?
O fair foundation laid whereon to build their ruin!" Hope is indeed restored by Michael's forecast of redemption by the Son of God, and yet—remembering the depths of woe which must be traversed first by countless souls as irresponsible for their existence as our first parents—we can but cry, "the pity of it!"

Paradise Lost—the idea, not merely Milton's poem—would indeed be intolerable, but for the balancing thought of Paradise Regained, and this in full and satisfying measure we find in the Eden of the Purgatorio. It is surely with boundless relief and thankfulness that we stand with Dante on the summit of the Mount, and learn at last the secret which made the Fall worth while:—

"Fuor sei dell este vie, fuor sei dell arte,
. . . . . .
Libero, dritto E sano è tuo arbitrio,
E fallo fora non fare a suo senno,
Per ch' is te sopra te corono E mitrio"

And there was, it seems, "no way but this."

Who does not see, however, that the difference goes deeper yet, and that Milton never contemplated a return to the Earthly Paradise? Not the restoration and perfecting of our human nature (which he regards as hopelessly corrupt) but the winning of the heavenly, through imputed righteousness, appears to be the goal of Milton's hopes: We may become very like the angels, but the perfection of humanity is lost for ever. Not so, said Dante: not fallen man, even although redeemed, can enter Heaven, but only man made perfect, first, through suffering. And in this the crowning contrast—the conclusion is surely forced upon us that Dante, in his intense concern for the human side of our nature, as distinct from higher elements, is nearer to modern aspiration than Milton, the poet of the seventeenth century.

CATHARINE D. BROOKE.

Vocation.

If I might choose my simple lot
Far from the town and quite forgot,
All in a sheltered nook and warm,
'Tis I would have a violet farm.

No daffodils should me entice,
Nor hyacinths with their breath of spice,
The tulip with her painted hood
For me should wither where she stood.

Instead of sheep upon the sward,
The modest violet I should herd.
Instead of golden heads arow,
Should see my violet harvest blow.

Under an arch of wild, wild cloud,
Below an opal mountain bowed,
All in a humid world and cool,
With winds and waters beautiful.

What airs across my farm should fare!
'Tis sweet where pinks and roses are:
But pinks and roses hide the face
Before a violet-peopled place.

No shortest day of all the year
Should fade without a violet's cheer,
Invisible sweetness hid within
And folded up in swathes of green.

Though white and purple babes be born
When Daffodil his flaming horn
O'er quiet hills and vales shall sound
And stir the sleepers underground;

What country bliss can equal mine,
With violets for my flocks and kine,
With violets for my corn and store?
What could a mortal wish for more?

Under a mountain pansy-dark,
Loved of the eagle and the lark,
And set too low for fear or harm,
'Tis I would have a violet farm.

Katharine Tynan.

Notes and Jottings.

There has been some fluttering in ecclesiastical dove-cots, occasioned by the issue of a suggested educational concordat. The document in question was given to the public at the end of June under the sponsorship of a committee of Lancashire Churchmen and Nonconformists, who had combined for the specific object of trying to find common ground. Principal Adeney wrote a long letter to the *Manchester Guardian* in explanation of the objects kept in view during the discussions and the measure of agreement arrived at. The object was evidently to recognize at the outset the limits of possible concession, and to discriminate between matters of principle and matters of preference and expediency.

Four things seem to have been assumed as fundamental. Firstly, the present educational position cannot be allowed to continue. It is satisfactory to nobody. It is not a settlement. Secondly, the country will not tolerate a secular system of primary education. The Bible must be kept in the schools. "A purely secularist party," to quote the words of Principal Adeney, "if we went to the polls, would be swept away like the Russian Fleet on the Sea of Japan." Thirdly, religious tests for teachers must be abolished. No teacher in future must be allowed to suffer in position on account of religious belief. Fourthly, the refusal of a large section of the Church of England party to accept anything short of what they consider full and adequate religious teaching for their own children must be recognized, and provision must be made accordingly. These are the primary positions in accordance with which the concordat has been framed, and they reveal at once the chief difficulties and criticisms which it has had to encounter.

Of course there was no hope of satisfying the extremists. Pacific and moderate men never expect to do that, if they are wise. The framers of concordats always incur instant and cordial hostility from many quarters. They are deserters from their party. They are preparing to surrender things for which brave men should die in the last ditch. They are guilty of the crime of trying to understand their opponents. Most damning charge of all, they have no mandate, and are without authority from superior and more warlike powers ever to have an opinion of their own. It all seems slightly ridiculous to people who are not blind partisans, and probably the peacemakers have a gentle laugh of their own at the expense of their angry critics.

We say this without pledging ourselves to any larger measure of agreement with the concordat in its present form. It strikes us that it has many obvious difficulties, and that its compromises are too finely balanced to be really practical. We welcome it chiefly for the temper it exhibits, and for the promise of better things which it contains. The fact of real significance is that a number of men have come together to discuss a thorny question in a spirit of mutual fairness and respect. They have done so, moreover, not merely as dreamy theorists, but with practical sagacity, for they have recognised that a settlement is a matter of urgent necessity in the interests of education, and that no settlement is possible without many mutual concessions. The bill, the whole bill, and nothing but the bill is a cry which serves the purpose of platform rhetoric, but it is of little use in the practical tasks of government. People like the framers of this Concordat, who engage in the work of serious discussion, without blinking the real facts of the situation, are the true friends of the republic. We hope that their pronouncement will encourage a more reasonable temper in the educational controversy.

So the unlikely thing has happend in France after all, and disestablishment is within a measurable distance of becoming an accomplished fact. It is far too soon to forecast the probable results of the measure upon the religious life of the people. The situation has been managed with great skill, and with an absence of the rancour and irritation, which seemed to be part of M. Coombe's policy. The terms meted out to the ecclesiastical bodies are generous, and have no air of spoli-

ation about them. Indeed it is hinted that the Roman Catholic party is disappointed with so much kindness, for it frustrates the hope of a vehement religious revival in response to a cry of persecution. It would be interesting to know the mind of the Vatican as it is confronted by the results of its diplomatic blundering.

Many of our readers will be glad to hear that the "Lectures on Agnosticism and Theism in the Nineteenth Century," by the Rev. R. A. Armstrong have been published. It is a welcome gift from his pen, though we hope we may have some further selection from his papers with a short memoir. The present book is popular in the best sense of the word; but why has the Committee responsible for its publication committed the blunder of charging two shillings for it? It should have been published for sixpence and sent broadcast into the quarters where the *Clarion* and "God and My Neighbour," and Hækel's "Riddle of the Universe" circulate. It is only in that way that the modern campaign of materialism can be opposed, and liberal religion is doing for less than its duty in this respect.

Prayer.

Almighty and Most Merciful God, in whom we live, and move, and have our being; Lord of all life; Source of all light, guiding and governing all things of Thy loving-kindness and power! Hear our thanksgivings unto Thee for all the joy that Thou puttest into mortal life; but chiefly for the joy that comes of sin forgiven, weakness strengthened, victory promised, life eternal looked for. To every one of us grant that, being fully conscious of having erred and strayed from Thy ways, we may be equally conscious of our need to go back again to the Good Shepherd. Let there be no doubt with any one of us that Thou dost forgive, even to the uttermost, all those who draw nigh in penitence to Thee; that so, those of us who are sinful, and sad because sinful, and sorrowful in sinning, may have this day the joy of the Lord. Amen.—*George Dawson.*

News from the Field.

Changes always but we adapt ourselves to them from day to day.

Mr. Emms has resigned his ministry at *Tamworth*, and will leave in September. His plans, as to the future, are unknown, but he is said to be working for his Degree at *Durham*. The old Congregation will have to make a new start. No doubt the Midland Christian Union will lend a helping hand. The *Rev. J. Evans, B.A.*, and his new wife have had a cordial welcome at *Colne*. *Mr. Stead* has been warmly received at *Mossley*, and *Mr. Burgess, Mr. Stead*, and *Mr. Brettall* have received presentations from the members of their old Congregations showing the respect they are held in by the people they are leaving. This will give a good start to them all in their new spheres of labour.

But the sad event of the month has been the resignation—owing to serious and prolonged ill-health—of the *Rev. E. W. Lummis*, at *Leicester*. *Mr. Lummis* is one of our most promising and cultured men, and his work was growing nobly in his hands; but he has been struck down by disease, which we fervently hope is only temporary, and will have to go away to *Davos* or some other health resort in the hope of mastering his enemy, and of coming back once more to some sphere of useful labour. We sympathise deeply with him and his family, as well as with the fine old Congregation of which he has been the Minister. Out of darkness may come light! God grant that it shall be so!

A paragraph of ours last month has troubled our friend *Dr. Warschauer*. The Editor has passed on to me a letter addressed to him in which the Dr. repudiates the words I wrote that I hoped he would "find a sphere more suitable to his aims and gifts than he found in our smaller and poor communion." He evidently has sought a more suitable sphere, though he intimates that financial motives have not influenced him. He says he has been out of sympathy with Unitarianism, theologically, for some time past. That he was influenced by the highest possible motives in leaving us, I, as well as all his friends will gladly believe and will continue to wish that he may do good work wherever he may go, and whatever he may do.

The harvest time of many of our Associations and Congregations has come, and they have been telling the story of their activities in a pleasing way. The Sunday *School Association* in *London* had a fine and fruitful anniversary—the aggregate meeting of the *London Schools* was a pleasing and helpful function—the *N. Cheshire schools* met in pic-nic in high spirits at *Mossley*, and the *Yorkshire S-School Union* had a good time at *Elland*. It is evident there is no falling off in zeal among scholars and teachers. Better books are being provided, and the Religious zeal is burning. This is as it should be.

Then the *Midland Christian Union* has had a very helpful meeting of its Council at Wolver-

hampton, with *Mr. Byng Kenrick* in the chair, when helpful addresses were given by the *Rev. A. H. Thomas* on "The Function of a Living Church"; the *Rev. W. C. Hall* on "The Bible in the Light of Modern Criticism," and the *Rev. J. C. Street* on "Unitarianism—the Reconciler of Religion." It was felt that meetings like this would be very useful all over the district, and they will be continued.

The 250th Annual Assembly of *West of England Divines* met at George's Meeting, *Exeter*. The proceedings were private. The *Rev. J. H. Hicks*, Congregational Minister of *Uffculme*, was elected *Moderator*, and the *Rev. John Barron*, of the Abbey Chapel, *Tavistock*, was re-elected as *Scribe*. The Assembly Dinner was at the Royal Clarence Hotel. We should gladly know more of this venerable assembly.

The *Irish Remonstrants* and the *Non-subscribing Association* held their gatherings in Belfast, and their proceedings were of the usual character except for a striking and helpful paper, full of wise and practical suggestions, from J. Campbell, M.D., son of one of our former Ministers. It seems likely that solid results for good will come out of this inspiring paper. Better days are likely to dawn upon our Irish brethren.

The *Lancashire and Cheshire Provincial Assembly* had a large, enthusiastic and encouraging meeting at *Monton*. All the functions were helpful, and the friends separated feeling that it had been good for them to come together once more.

In *Ipswich* our Eastern Union gathered under pleasant auspices, and the *S. Wales Unitarians* met in great force in *Cardiganshire* all alike animated by one energetic and progressive spirit.

The *three* Colleges—*Oxford*, *Manchester*, and *Carmarthen* have had their examinations, and the meetings of their supporters. A general feeling of pleasure at the record of the work of the year was expressed, and the *Visitors* said many kind and helpful words. But there were few men to come out into the "field of work." Many of our ministers have to come from outside sources, or we should fail to supply our pulpits or carry on our Mission work. We hope better things will come. Meanwhile *Manchester* is moving to the front. A real home has been found for classes and residence, with ample grounds for study and exercise, and there is promise that lay students of the University with Ministerial students of the College may live together and learn in common to love the great principles of Religion and Freedom, which are at once our heritage and our Mission.

The old students of the Manchester College met in general assembly under the Presidency of the *Rev. J. C. Street*, and determined to do their best to raise the £5,000 needed to put the College on a firm financial foundation before the close of the present year. They themselves promised the first *£250*, and a promise was made by an unknown friend to give the last £1,000. The enterprise is a bold one, but it is sure to be successful. The garden party of nearly a thousand people in the new grounds of the College was a brilliant success.

Some day these Colleges—federated in one group may be able to supply all our needs as they will certainly stir up a new life among us.

We note with some interest that Professor Addis of our College at Oxford seems to have definitely gone over to the Church of England. He is a conscientious man, and guides his life by thehighest principles, and it is such he sees his way to carry on his professorship in a College that is absolutely unsectarian and free. He knows the path he is treading, and will be sure to remember where and what he is, and the obligation he is under to the principles of the College.

The *Missionary Conference* is going on its way steadily—now numbering nearly a hundred members—is full of zeal and good will, and means to grow in usefulness as the years go by. It has elected *Rev. A. Gordon, M.A.*, as its President for the coming year, the *Rev. W. R. Shanks* as its Secretary, and it has determined to go on with its seaside work whenever suitable openings occur—to do its best to establish a cause at Douglas, and to send out a *Mission Van* to spread the knowledge of the Love of God, and the Love of man, and to disseminate literature to promote the higher thought and the nobler life. It is now approaching its Jubilee, and will be known widely for its good work.

The *Rev. Dr. Hunter* is pleading for an unsectarian church. Can he not see men and Congregations all around him having the same aims, and bearing bravely the banner in front of the world? Here is a brotherhood of free souls whether men see or acknowledge it or not.

The Temperance Folk in our Free Churches continue to promote the Unitarian Temperance Association. So long as it does not link together our Congregations, but only individual Unitarians in them it will do a good work. But Temperance—like Holiness and Truth, should be unsectarian.

The month has again to carry its tribute of pure souls into the home of all souls. We take reverent leave of good men and women who have lived righteous lives and passed into the Eternal world; among these are the venerable *Mrs. Roberts* of *Dunmurry*, the great Indian Seer and Saint *Protap Mozoomdar*, the sturdy worker *Clement F. Dear*, of *Portsmouth*, the helpful friend and patient Magistrate, *C. Birshall*, of *Warrington*, the quiet student *John Clyde*, of *Ipswich*, and the honourable merchant *Wm. Jessop*, of *Sheffield*, and great souls like *Mrs. Rose*, of *Stockton*, and *W. Robinson* of *Raloo*. These all, with other golden grains of humanity, have been gathered in a harvest sheaf by the great Master of the Eternal Harvest Field.

SCRUTATOR.

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